

Jesus Baptism

January 8, 2017 – Matthew 3:13-17

“Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter Him, saying, I need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me? Jesus replied, Let it be so now, it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness. Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, This is My Son, Whom I love, with Him I am well pleased.”

We just finished celebrating Christmas - The Birth of our Savior Jesus.

We celebrated the New Year with New Year’s Eve parties and New Year’s Day recovery.

We celebrate Easter – The resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead.

We celebrate Thanksgiving with a big family meal, as we thank God for all that He has given us through the year.

We celebrate our own birthdays.

WHY NOT Celebrate your baptismal Day with a great family gathering and family feast?

The day that you were baptized is the day that the Lord God gave you new life in Christ Jesus our Lord!

The day that you were baptized is the day that the Holy Spirit entered your heart and created faith in your heart - Saving Faith - in Jesus your Savior.

Baptism is not just a mere symbol or an empty ritual. It is for the Forgiveness of SINS! In Baptism God creates Saving Faith in Jesus. This is done in an instant and in a Moment.

We know this because God tells us in Peter’s Sermon on Pentecost Sunday

– Acts 2:38-39 – “Repent and be baptized every one of you for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

And so why not look up your baptism date and celebrate that day with rejoicing?

To be baptized is to admit to the fact that we have sin and thus need the forgiveness of sins.

And so why did Jesus need to be baptized?

Jesus is God. Jesus is perfect in every way. Jesus does not have sin in any way, shape or form.

Yet Christ Jesus became sin for us as God tells us through the Apostle Paul in **II Corinthians 5:21 – “God made Him Who had no sin TO BE sin for us, so that in Him we might become the Righteousness of God.”**

Even John the Baptist questioned the need for Jesus to be baptized.

Vs. 14 – But John tried to deter Him, saying, I need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?

And what answer does Jesus give?

Vs. 15 – Jesus replied, Let it be so now, it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness. Then John consented.

“TO FILFILL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

What does that Mean?

The Greek term for righteousness is the same term that is used for Justification.

To be declared not guilty, to be made right. - δικαιωσυνην - Can also be translated - **“To fulfill what God Requires”**

Jesus does not disagree with John the Baptist when John admits that Jesus should be the one doing baptism.
Jesus is without sin. He already had the Holy Spirit, since He was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

By Jesus submitting to baptism, Jesus was stepping in FOR US. On Our behalf.

Jesus became sin for us, and became our Substitute.

Pastor Kretzmann quotes from Martin Luther: *“John the Baptist is getting in Jesus, a sinner who in His own person has NO sin, and yet is the greatest sinner, that has and bears the sin of the whole world. For this reason Jesus permits Himself to be baptized and confesses with this action that He is a sinner. However, not for Himself, but FOR US.”*

Pastor Kretzmann also continues by stating:

“Therefore, For the sake of sinners Jesus became a sinner, and must therefore do what God has charged the sinner to do, in order that they may become Just, made right through ME.” (Kretzmann)

At the Baptism of Jesus, it marks the beginning of His PUBLIC Earthly Ministry.

Jesus of course was already active in saving the World, since He had lived His life perfectly from conception, as He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Jesus began with the fulfillment of the Law in his Circumcision on the 8th day.

This Baptism of Jesus marks the “SETTING apart,” the consecrating of Jesus by God as the Savior of the World.

The Baptism of Jesus has an exclamation point put on the conclusion.

Much like on the 4th of July there is the grand finale for the fireworks, the final largest and loudest firework or group of fast fireworks.

Vs. 16 – As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on Him.

Vs. 17 – And a voice from heaven said, This is My Son, Whom I love, with Him I am well pleased.

Heaven was opened and the Spirit of God descended upon Jesus like a dove.

Heaven is open. It is open because of Jesus our Substitute.

As Martin Luther is believed to have stated when he came to realize that he was saved, not by works, but by Faith in Jesus His Savior, Luther exclaimed, “It was as if the Gates of Heaven were opened!” AMEN